



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# National Key Deer Refuge

## *Key Deer Recovery Efforts*



Male Key deer during rut. (Chad Anderson/USFWS Photo)

### **What is the Key deer?**

The Key deer is the smallest version of the white-tailed deer, standing only 3 feet in height. Key deer are unique to the lower keys and can only be found on 20-25 islands in the Florida Keys. Due to habitat loss, the Key deer was listed as an endangered species in 1967. Today, the estimated population is 875.

### **What's happening to Key deer?**

In early July 2016 there was an increase in the number of sick Key deer being reported. Responders noticed large, maggot infested wounds on a few deer.

The maggots were submitted to the University of Florida for identification and were later confirmed by the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratories as New World Screwworms.

### **What are some of the recovery efforts?**

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service) employees have partnered with U.S. Department of Agriculture, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Monroe County and local community members to respond to this incident. Service biologists and wildlife veterinarians have been working to select the best techniques for administering preventative treatment to Key deer.

Neighborhood volunteer efforts are taking place in affected areas to administer anti-parasitic doses to the more urban deer population and medication stations have been set up in backcountry areas to administer doses to these deer populations.

### **How can you help Key deer?**

You can help by being an advocate for Key deer:

- Report dead or injured deer by



Female Key deer self-treating at medication station. (Kate Watts/USFWS Photo)

calling the Key Deer Hotline at 888-404-3922 ext. 7.

- Sign up as a refuge volunteer for the neighborhood efforts. Email [keydeer@fws.gov](mailto:keydeer@fws.gov) to find out more information about how you can help.
- Remember to drive slow and be alert when near Key deer habitat.

### **Where can I find more information?**

For up-to-date information on Key deer recovery efforts:

- Check out the refuge website: [www.fws.gov/refuge/National\\_Key\\_Deer\\_Refuge/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/National_Key_Deer_Refuge/).
- Check out our Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/floridakeysrefuges/>.
- For questions, contact [usfwsscrewworminfo@gmail.com](mailto:usfwsscrewworminfo@gmail.com).



(Noni Cay Photography)